

Parsons Nursery, Pump House  
South side of U.S. Route 219, .25 miles  
Southeast of Parsons  
Parsons Vicinity  
Tucker County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-237-I

HABS  
WVA  
47-PARSV,  
II-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HABS  
WVA  
47-PARSON,  
II-

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

HABS No. WV-237-I

PARSONS NURSERY, Pump House

Location: South side of U. S. Route 219, .25 miles southeast of Parsons, Tucker County, West Virginia

USGS Parsons Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17.614220.4327595

Present Owner: Monongahela National Forest  
Department of Agriculture  
Sycamore Street Box 1548  
Elkins, WV 26241

Last Occupant: Department of Natural Resources  
State of West Virginia

Last Use: Nursery irrigation pump house; vacant

Significance: The nursery pump house was built between 1928-1930 with Forest Service general operating funds. It was a part of the Parsons Nursery of the Monongahela National Forest. It was the building where Black Fork River water was pumped into a surface irrigation system for the Parsons Nursery. This pump house was used by both the Forest Service and the Department of Natural Resources, State of West Virginia until 1985. For overview of Parsons Nursery, see HABS No. WV-237.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1928 is derived from the construction drawings dated May, 1928 (wv-237-I-3). The building appears in a 1930 photograph (see WV-237-15).
2. Architect: Blue prints are signed by George W. Root, who was Examiner of Surveys for the Southern District of Monongahela National Forest in 1926. Probably he and nursery manager D. A. Oliver designed this and the other nursery buildings built before 1934.
3. Original and present owner: Monongahela National Forest.
4. Builder: The pump house was constructed by contract labor for Monongahela National Forest, according to John King.
5. Original Plans: Blue prints for the original construction, one sheet, is housed at the Monongahela National Forest Office, Elkins, WV.
6. Alterations and additions: The wooden floor has been removed. A second concrete pad and water pump was added. The building has washed off its foundation and is not square.

B. Historical Context:

The nursery office, original wash house (now seed stratification), workshop/warehouse, a garage, a water tower, and pump house were constructed before 1930. This pump house was designed to be an original part of the complex, providing power to pump water from the Black Fork River for irrigation of the nursery beds.

The original pump used a left-hand adapted Hercules engine. The irrigation system was a Skinner above-ground system. Pipe was stored on the second floor of the workshop/warehouse. The Hercules engine supplied water to the nursery beds north, east, and west of the nursery administrative complex. A second Chrysler engine supplied water to the beds across from the cone drying shed and behind the nursery manager's residence. From the beginnings of nursery operations until the early 1940s, the irrigation system used gravity flow from a redwood water tank to feed the irrigation system. The tank was behind the pump house on the north side (see WV-237-34). According to Dovie Fansler, irrigation was used in the heat of the summer, either in the morning or during the day. Between 1951 and 1958, Alvin Allison

supervised installation of an underground watering system for the nursery. This system principally used a pump house upstream of the nursery buildings complex. That pump house was destroyed by the November 1985 flood.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The pump house is one of a complex of Forest Service buildings constructed in a simple, rustic, gable-roofed, shingle style. This building uses native materials available in Monongahela National Forest, such as pine framing and sawn cedar shingles. It follows the local convention of exterior diagonal wind-brace sheathing with herringbone, centered joints.
2. Condition of fabric: Flood damage has shifted the structure askew 14" off its foundation. The sill of the building is not square. Some siding is missing. Building is structurally sound.

### B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: A one-story, rectangular plan, this building is 12'-4" x 14'-4". It is one bay wide and one bay deep. There is a doorway in each gable end, a window in each side.
2. Foundation: 8" poured concrete.
3. Walls: Exterior walls are wood shingled with random width cedar cut shingles applied in courses of 5" exposure. There are 5-1/2" plain yellow painted corner boards. The foundation-roof height at the corner is 9'-9"; the height at the peak is 15'-9".
4. Structural system: The wood frame walls are "2x4's", on 24" centers, covered in 1" thick diagonal sheathing boards--a typical West Virginia mountain framing system, covered in a heavy tarred felt. Studs are doubled at corners, door and window openings. Wall sills are "2x6's", wall plates are doubled "2x4's". The roof rafters and roof ties are "2x6's" on 24" centers with a "1x6" ridge board. All framing members appear to be yellow pine. There is no attic or ceiling.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: There is a concrete landing at each door. The stoop at the sliding door is 5' x 3', at the west door is 5' x 4'-7".

6. Chimneys: None.

7. Openings

a. Doorways and doors: The east door is a sliding double door with 5-1/2" jambs and "2x6" head extending from corner post to corner post. The head extends 1" and has a "1x6" hood with 3/8" metal drip flashing. Doors are 3' x 7'-3" with 4" side styles, 5" top and bottom stiles. They are made of diagonal "1x6" tongue-and-groove pine boards, vertical tongue-and-groove pine boards on the inside. The west doorway has 4-1/2" jambs and head, butt-jointed with a 1-1/2" sill. The 6'-8" west door has four raised and molded horizontal panels. Doorway trim and doors are painted yellow.

b. Windows and shutters: The two side windows are the same. Window frames are plain, 4-1/2" butt-jointed jambs with heads that extend 1/2", 1/1 double hung sash. Window openings are 3'-8" x 2'-8". Window sash and trim are painted yellow. There never have been shutters.

8. Roof: The gable roof has asbestos shingles that have replaced the original sawn cedar shingles. The exposed rafter ends have no fascia. On each gable end, the "2x6" rake board is notched so that the "4x4" wall plate and "4x4" ridge piece extend 1/2" beyond the rake boards and are not bevelled. The cornice and exposed rafters are painted yellow. The gable overhang is 13-1/2", including the rake board; the eave overhang is 8".

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The rectangular building originally had a wooden floor and one pump set on a concrete pad. There now are two pumps, two concrete pads and a poured concrete floor.

2. Stairways: None.

3. Flooring: Poured concrete.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The structure is exposed and unpainted.

5. Openings: There is no interior jamb on either doorway. Window jambs and heads are 4-1/2", extending 1/2". The under sill board is 4-1/2". The 1" sill is ogee-shaped.

6. Decorative features and trim: Two tool boxes, 43" x 30", one with a glazed door, are mounted on the north wall. Each has a frame of "2x4's" and stencils of the tools that they housed. Stencils were added during the Allison management of the nursery, 1951-1958. Each water supply and outflow passes through the walls of the pump house through 4" diameter iron pipes. The pumps are mounted on 6'-6" x 3'-0" concrete pads, 6" high.
  7. Hardware: The double sliding door hardware is 2" diameter iron tube opener mounted across the entire facade. The doors are hung on 1-1/2" iron strap hangers affixed with 1/2" iron bolts at the top. The iron hasp is 1-1/2" x 7-1/2". The one surviving cast iron pull has a bean top and bottom and is 9" tall. Windows have brass-plated thumb locks and a single curved finger lift.
  8. Mechanical equipment: Building was not heated. Present lighting is one wall-mounted ceramic fixture. There are two panel boxes, one for each pump drive. A 6" supply buried water line enters the building from the river; a 4" line feeds to the outside on the south.
  9. Original furnishings: The two pumps, a left-hand Hercules and a Chrysler, survive.
- D. Site: The building faces northeast, at 57°30'. It survives in its original site, at the edge of the wooded river bank. A black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) is 18' east of the building, a white oak (*Quercus alba*) is 9'-6" east of the building.

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: one sheet, dated May, 1928, located at Monongahela National Forest Offices, Elkins, WV.
- B. Historic views: Forest Service photographs, Monongahela National Forest, Elkins, WV.
- C. Interviews: Alvin Allison, 7-23-1989, Charleston, WV, Parsons Nursery supervisor, 1952-57; Dovie Fansler, 6-10-1989, Elkins, WV, Cheat Ranger District secretary, 1957-1964; Dorsey Knight, 10-25-1989, Parsons, WV, Parsons Nursery employee, 1932-1951.
- D. McKim, C. R., Monongahela National Forest History, unpublished manuscript, November, 1970.

Monongahela National Forest, Parsons Nursery, Building Location Plan, unpublished manuscript, 1928.

Monongahela National Forest, Parsons Nursery, Special Use Permit, West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, unpublished manuscript, 1969.

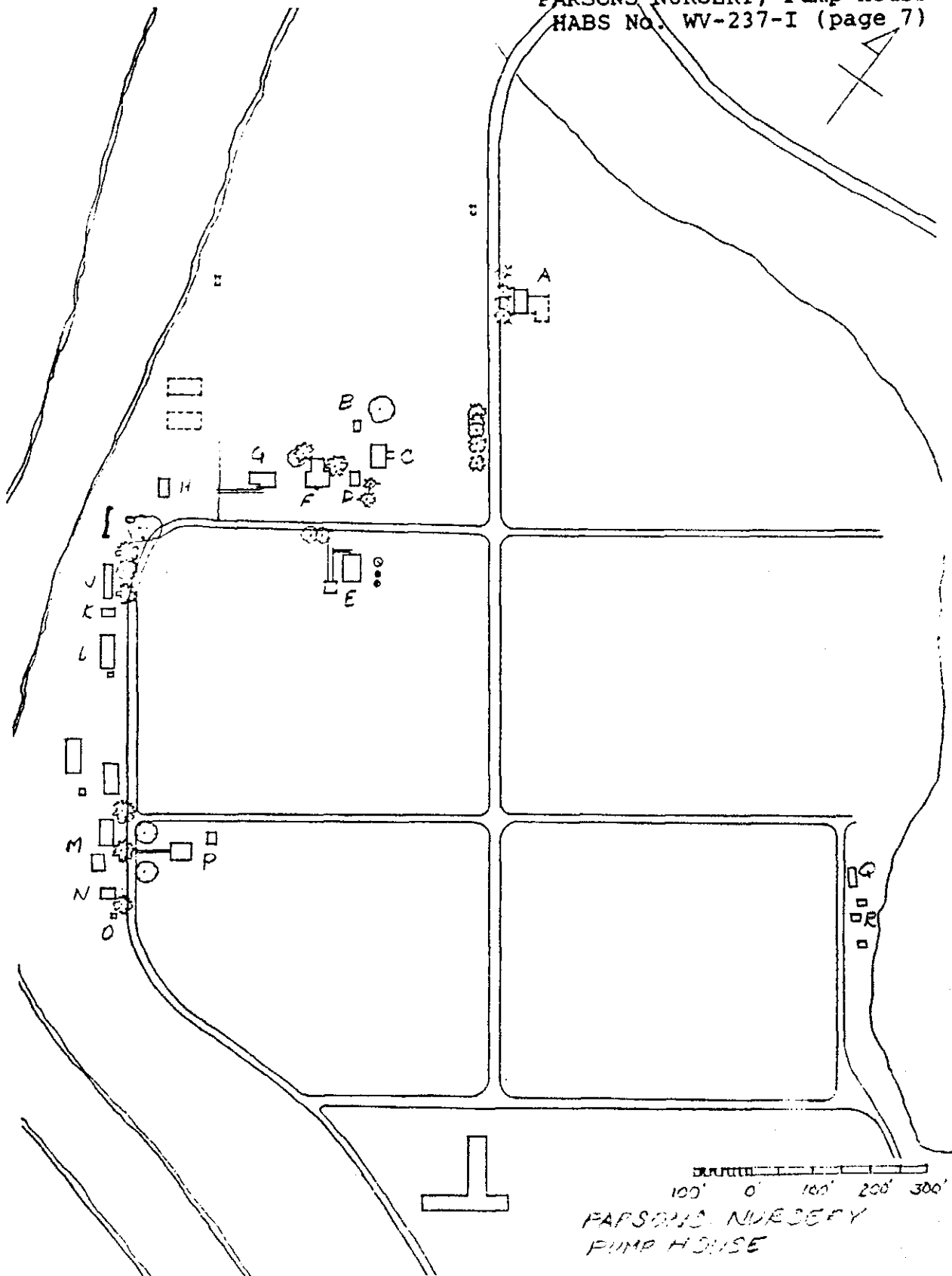
Pierce, R. G., Map Showing Blister Rust Control, Forest Service Nursery, Parsons, WV, unpublished manuscript, 1930.

#### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The architectural and historical documentation of the Parsons Nursery Bottom site has been undertaken to fulfill a memorandum of agreement signed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the West Virginia SHPO and the USDA Forest Service as part of requirements under regulation 36 CFR 800 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Recording has taken place prior to substantial modification and/or removal of structures damaged by a flood in November, 1985.

This documentation has been prepared by: Rebecca M. Rogers, Preservation Consultant, 44 Audubon Road, Youngstown, Ohio, under contract to Monongahela National Forest, April-November, 1989.

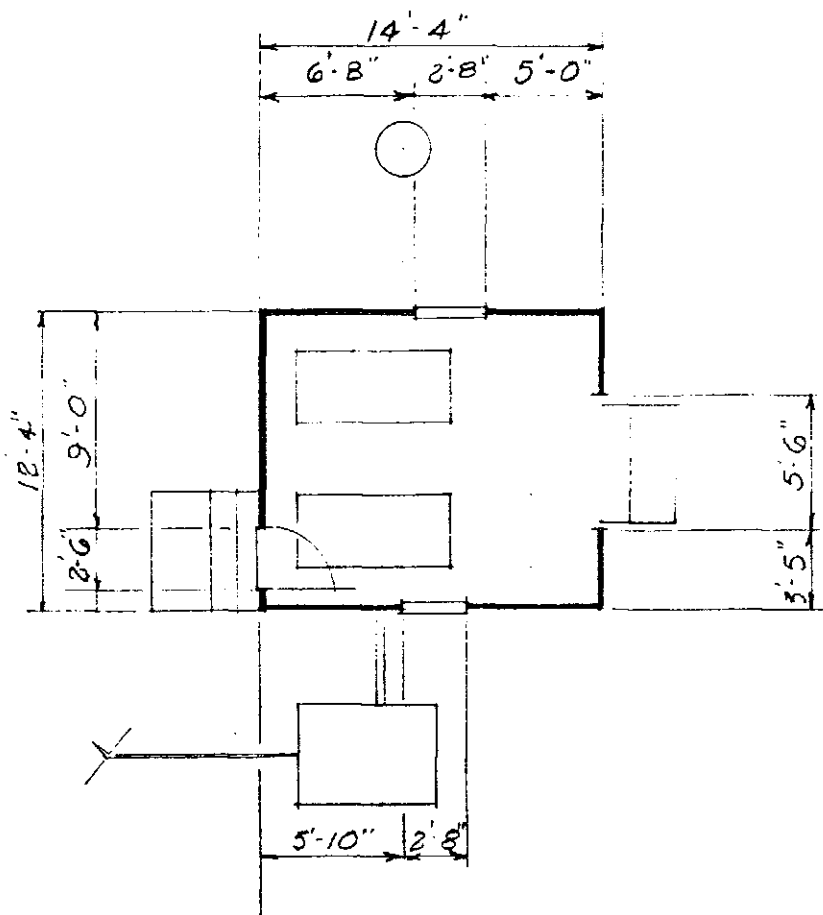
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57° 30'



PUMP HOUSE

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